1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

182 164 181 cheeked, hardy, lithe and active little creatures, and the young women—in the Taurus especially—are said to be models of physical beauty. Mr. Millingen gives the following glowing description of one among the many handsome girls he saw during his residence among these freebooting highlanders: "Her complexion gave me an idea of what must have been the bloom of the forbidden apple of the terrestrial Paradise. Her eyes, of a dark chestnut, shone like brilliants through the veil of her thick, long eyelashes, while nose and mouth were perfect in their delicacy of shape. Though the garments she wore were not of a superior sort, yet through their folds her graceful form could be detected. But what above all contributed to make her really charming was the calm, simple, and, so to say, infantine air which distinguished her countenance and the whole of her demeanour."[1]

●173 Some Kūrdish families in Boktan and Hakkari claim descent from the Ommeyīde Khalifs, and some travellers are of opinion that the tribe of the Rowadi, to which Saladin belonged, may possibly be the same as the modern Revendi, or Rewendi. The chiefs of the Bebbeh clan confidently affirm that they have in their veins English blood from an ancestress called Keighan, the legend concerning whom will be found in a subsequent chapter.[2] Less mythical, perhaps, is the story of the company belonging to the Second Crusade (1147-49), who wandered in a north-easterly direction from Syria, and not being

[1] *Wild Life among the Kúrds.*
[2] See p. 174.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

able to find their way back, settled in the mountains of Kûrdistan.[1] 175

The two above described classes of Kûrds are distinguished among themselves by terms signifying respectively, "Dwellers in tents," or "Nomads," and "Labourers," or "Subjects" (*Reyahs*). 565

The peasant Kûrds are said to outnumber the warriors in the proportion of four or five to one. The latter are estimated at some thirteen thousand families, of whom ten thousand are nomad, the remainder being settled in the towns and villages. All these warrior Kûrds are divided into tribes, of which they distinguish three kinds: *ashiré* (great tribes), *qushlé* (medium tribes), and *tháifé* (small tribes). These are counted by tents or houses, each of which contains from five to twenty inmates. The great tribes are subdivided into *qushlé* and *tháifé*, or merely into *tháifé*, which term is also generally used to denote a tribe, whether great or small. The small tribes which are unconnected with an *ashiré* are called isolated *tháifé*. 563 [62] 616

The tribes, or clans, consist of the family of the chief, and a number of other families more or less closely connected with it. In their encampments the tent of the chief is conspicuous among the others by its size, for it is the council chamber, court of justice, and general meeting-place of the elders of the tribe, and in it general hospitality is exercised. Clan feeling and devotion to the chief are the leading characteristics of these wild people. The head of the tribe is, however, not an arbitrary ruler, the voices of the 616 621 622

[1] Binder, *Au Kurdistan, en Mésopotamie, &c.*, p. 120.

There is no electricity in Rowanduz, although it is connected with telegraph and telephone wires, and lighting is by fuel, gasoline, kerosene, or oil. After nightfall the streets are completely dark, save for a few shops or shebkhanes open late and a rare door-lantern burning for visitors, and it is customary for those walking at night to be preceded by a servant with a lantern, or to carry a light themselves.

Water is derived from a spring above the town, that which turns the mill Asiā Sherīfī, and flows down through the streets in small channels and pipes, frequently bridged or covered with flagstones. British engineers laid pipes connecting a series of three iron pumps to better utilise this water, but the pumps have long ceased to flow and are jokingly attributed by the better educated, such as the teachers, to Harun al-Rashid, the Abbasid caliph to whom a great number of ruined bridges and fortresses are referred by the villagers. In shallow ditches the water follows several routes through the town, sometimes in the open and sometimes through pipes, those of the British and a few segments laid by the townspeople themselves. Most of the larger houses have an interior tank or basin, and pipes, closed during most of the day, lead in from the ditches to these. The Kurds of this area, unlike some of their contemporaries in the Middle East, have definite ideas on what constitutes "clean" water, that which is cold and clear, although they may have no appreciation of its relative purity. Rashid Agha of Jindian, whose father's

tribal group as a whole from which the chieftain is "granted" his yearly share, while in other cases they are his personal possessions, inherited through the male family, which he can dispose of as he pleases. It appears that a stage between tribal and feudal society is represented here, a combination of both systems which may have existed in this way for centuries, and which is largely primitive in character.

The aristocratic Kurdish households are, in fact, extended patrilineal families for which the term is fellîya, parallel in its etymology to the Latin familia. The same noun is sometimes applied to houses of great wealth and numbers, but this seems to be comparatively rare. Only those households and sayyids, descendants of the tribe of the Prophet, keep genealogies (şejera, from Arabic shajara, "tree"). In the case of the sayyid the title can be inherited on either side, but the patent of nobility is solely patrilineal. One of the tests of nobility is said to be the ability to name one's patrilineal forebears to seven generations, and no one in Rowandus, outside of these families, is able to perform this feat. The titles of the nobility include beg, axha, and sir, all of Turkish derivation. In Ottoman times paşa was also in use, and the grandfather of Ismā'il Beg was called "Abdullah Paşha." The Arabic shaykh, literally, "old man," appears, as in such distinguished Kurdish figures as Shaykh Mahmud, leader of the revolts in 1922 and 1930, and Shaykh Taha,

the son-in-law of the Prophet and his descendants. Something of the divisive aversion of the Sunnite Kurd for his eastern neighbor has already been seen, although phrased as much in ethnic as in religious terms. Of the four Medieval Sunnite schools of religious law, Hanifite, Malikite, Shafi'ite, and Hanbalite, the Kurds nominally belong to that founded by Abu Hanifa (d. 767), originally a following noted for its liberal tendencies and the admission of logic in formulating legislation, now, however, crystallized into a rite not differing too greatly from its surviving fellows.

Beyond this brief classification, it is of no purpose here to enter into an extended discussion of the theological content of Islam insofar as it does not pertain to daily life, for, not only are these matters exhaustively and competently treated elsewhere, they are largely of no moment to the townsman or chieftain. The investigator was often told, on inquiring into some matter of religion, that "one must ask the mulla these questions," just as many Christians refer weightier queries to their priest or minister. In noting the Shiite insistence that the successors of the Prophet be of his own blood, the sayyid ("lord") or descendant of the Tribe of Muhammad might be mentioned. Many persons in the Rowanduz district, as well as several in the town itself, lay claim to this distinction, which carries with it the prerogative of wearing a green turban and the enjoyment, if they choose to exploit it, of a reputation for sanctity. This descent

may be traced through either parent, and almost anyone, if genealogies were regularly kept by the commoners, could find some relative from whom the title might be claimed. The only sayyid in Rowanduz who made use of the green turban was a poor and elderly blacksmith, something of an extrovert, who also wore a beard to increase his appearance of saintliness. The chieftains, many of whom have the title, usually avoid these appearances, such as Sayyid Ahmad of Batas who dressed in the same fashion as the other aristocrats. Whether these pedigrees are genuine or bogus is impossible to say, for the Arab penetration of Kurdistan has gone on for many centuries, but one may suspect that, insofar as the title accords a little social distinction, many of these claims, at some point, are as valid as those of some pretentious Englishman who finds ancestors for himself who landed with the Conqueror or an American who discovers forebears on the Mayflower.

The religious phraseology of the townspeople is in the Arabic language. All of their prayers, pious utterances, and, indeed, their expletives are in Arabic, while everyday speech is Kurdish. Prayer will be dealt with below. The most common expletive, heard constantly in the conversation of the day, is simply Yilah, "God." It can be used in a variety of contexts, some of them pious and many quite otherwise. The tired merchant stretching himself on his cushions or bed may utter a long-drawn out Yilah, and the same is applied to a welcome glass of tea, a lovely woman, or the like. It should not be supposed, of course,

4: Human E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

CHAPTER I

FIELD OF INVESTIGATION

The Kurds are an Indo-European people whose tongue, which has several dialects, is related to Persian. By religion they are Sunnis of the shafi'i rite of Islam. Kurdistan has never existed as a political concept, although the Kurds appear through history to have inhabited the same mountainous areas as they do to-day. To the north their country, whose backbone is the Anti-Taurus, is bounded by a line drawn through Erivan, Erzerum, Erzinjan and then in a crescent through Mar'ash towards Aleppo. To the south-west the line runs along the foot of the mountains to Nisaibin, thereafter to the Tigris and Mosul and then in a straight line to Mandali on the frontier between Iraq and Iran. To the east the limit of the Kurdish area runs in a south-easterly direction from Erivan, comprises the Maku district, part of Khoi, Urmia, Mahabad, Saqqiz and Sanna to Kirmanshah. The main road from Kirmanshah to Kerind, and thereafter in a straight line to Mandali, roughly forms the border between the settled Kurds and the Lakis and Luri related to them.

Descriptions of people who can be taken as the ancestors of the Kurds of our day are found in Xenophon's Anabasis (400 B.C.) and given by Strabo (64 B.C.–20 A.D.). It has been maintained that the Kurds were identical with the Medes of ancient times. In regard to the various theories concerning the origin of the Kurds see Nikitine[1]. The legend concerning a mysterious descent can be found in "Sharafnameh", the history of the Kurds, written in Persian in 1596[2]. Since the Median Kingdom succumbed to the Persian king, Cyrus, in 550 B.C., the area that is now Southern Kurdistan was first a part of the Achaemenid Kingdom (until 331 B.C.) and was thereafter ruled by the Greek Seleucids, by the Parthians, Persian Sassanids, Arabian caliphs, Mongols and Turkomans, until the Persian Safavid dynasty and the Ottoman empire laid (1639) the boundary between them through Kurdistan. To-day this area, which is inhabited by about 3 million Kurds, is divided between Iran, Turkey and Iraq, with small overlappings in Syria and the Soviet Union[3]. Thus, in 1638, the Persian Kurds were separated from their countrymen, who remained under Turkish rule until the end of the First World War.

At the end of that conflict in 1918 the two Turkish areas, the Basra and Baghdad Vilayets, were placed by the Arab Basra, Iraq, under British mandate, whilst the question of the national status of the third area, the Mosul Vilayet, whose northern mountains were inhabited by Kurds, was made the subject of further negotiation. Inspired by no. 12 of President Wilson's 14 points, the idea was launched at the peace negotiations at Sèvres in 1920 of creating an autonomous Kurdish state with a prospect of complete independence[4]. This was to comprise the areas east of the Euphrates inhabited

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE HAMAWAND.

• 173 178 According to their own traditions, the Hamawands entered Southern Kurdistan from Persia as nomadic herdsmen. Seeing the opportunities offered by the ineffectual nature of Ottoman governmental control, they entered on a career of brigandage, looting the caravans that passed between Persia and Iraq. The uneasy relations between the Persian and Ottoman empires made this all the more feasible, since any activity detrimental to one power had the covert support of the other. Though the Hamawands later settled in villages, they did not immediately take up agriculture, except for small garden patches of melons etc. As they proudly assert: «For more than a generation we reaped our daily bread with our gunbarrels». All accounts by early travellers describe how this small group terrorized the district by striking quickly and effectively in widely separated areas. Only after the First World War did their economy become truly based on farming. Through this turbulent history, tribal political organization retained its importance, and some features of the system may be seen very clearly.

618 619 642 The Hamawand group as a whole is regarded as one *tira* of the same magnitude as the various component Jaf *tiras*. Even in its greatest period of glory, the Hamawand *tira* could muster no more than 200-300 horsemen, implying a total population of 1,000-1,500 individuals. The process of branching has however been initiated; in fact, as compared to the Jaf, the Hamawand political structure seems to be based on a clearer political recognition of the segmentation into lineage sections which follows from the marriage pattern. The hierarchy of progressively more inclusive lineage segments, from the single village level (population 50—100) and up to the maximal lineage group, is given political significance.

642 There is no single leader of the whole Hamawand *tira*[1]); questions concerning the group as a whole are discussed and decided in a council made up of the *Aghas* (=headman) of the 4 primary branches. Each of these branches are again divided into sub-branches,

[1]) Actually, Mohammad Amin Agha of the Begzade claims paramount position.

9: Roosevelt G-5 (1946-1947) 1947 MA11 Kurd MA11
Mahabad

Those who had an opportunity to meet Qazi Mohammad could not fail to be impressed with his personality, and easily understood how he had become a symbol for Kurdish nationalists everywhere. A short man of fifty, dressed in an old army overcoat, he had a lightly bearded, ascetic face, slightly yellowish in complexion from a stomach complaint. He neither smoked nor drank and ate very little. His voice was gentle and well-modulated, his gestures quiet but effective. Something of an internationalist, he was interested in all the peoples of the world and knew many languages, including Russian, a little English, and Esperanto. His desk was customarily littered with grammars and readers and literary works in foreign tongues.

He seemed to be a man of deep convictions, backed with a rare courage and self-sacrifice, but tempered with broad-mindedness and moderation. During the period in question, at least, his demands were moderate: Kurdish autonomy within the Iranian state. He professed to share the view of many Kurds that since they were members of the same Iranian racial family as the Persians proper, there was no reason why they could not form the same combination as did the ancient Medes and Persians. Qazi himself thought the Kurds were the descendants of the Medes, and liked to give his own etymology of Mahabad — "abode of the Medes."

Yet it would be impossible to deny that he and his followers also held pan-Kurdish aspirations and hoped to make Mahabad the center of Kurdish culture and the Kurdish nationalist movement, replacing Syria and Sulcimania, its centers at the present time. Great efforts were being made to put Kurdish education on a sound footing. At first Kurdish teachers had to translate from Persian textbooks orally in the classroom, but shortly before the fall of the Kurdish Republic, textbooks in Kurdish had been printed for the primary grades. In addition to a newspaper and a political monthly periodical, both called *Kurdistan*, there were published two primarily literary magazines, *Hawar* and *Hilal*.[10] All of these were printed on a press presented by the Red Army to

[10] A number of other Kurdish periodicals had been published during the Komala period, such as *Kelaviz* and recently *Nishtiman*, official organ of the party, which have a picture of Stalin on the cover and circulated in Iraq as well as Iran.

4z Wilson G-3 (no date) 1937 MH1 Iraq MH1
Kurd MAN

I K. 438 439 173 782 539

now a flourishing market for the surrounding country and for trade with Turkey. It has one feature of great interest: an ancient bridge of Roman design, known locally as "Alexander's bridge," though unlikely to be in any way connected with the great conqueror. Tradition at Zakho has, however, another tale of the construction of the bridge. It is said to have been built by a celebrated local governor, who found that the keystone would not remain in place. He summoned a soothsayer, who proclaimed that it would never stand until a life had been built into the arch. The governor accepted the verdict and with his councillors, who were sworn to secrecy, decided that the first living thing to follow them on to the bridge the next morning would provide the necessary victim. They waited for some hours, but no one came. Then the governor's little daughter wondered why her father was so long away and taking her pet dog she set off to look for him. Her father was at first terrified when he saw her coming, but was relieved when he noticed that her dog was running in front of her. Alas, she thought it unfitting for the dog to approach her father before she did and so she called it and stepped on to the bridge. Public opinion compelled the governor to carry out the sacrifice and the girl was built into the centre of the arch and the keystone held and has gone on holding for hundreds of years.

I K 653 185

The development of Kurdistan has naturally not been popular with all the Kurds, and I remember an interesting incident. During the construction of the Amadia road, an elderly Agha stood for a while sadly watching the blasting of a pulpit of overhanging rock. When echoes of the explosion had died and the last fragments of stone had fallen into the rocky gorge below, he turned sorrowfully away. "The old days, the old days," he lamented. "Many is the time I lay behind that rock with my rifle and held up caravans for safe-conduct money."

I K 721 361

The town of Amadia, which, like Edinburgh Castle, is situated on a rocky plateau at a height of 4,100 feet, sixteen feet higher than Cairn Gorm, is now easily accessible by road. The town was formerly ruled by semi-independent Pashas who admitted a nominal suzerainty to the Turkish authorities. It has a stormy history, and the minaret of the mosque is pitted with bullet holes. These are souvenirs of 1925, when the Barzan Kurds, in alliance with some of the descendants of the old rulers of Amadia, attacked the town and succeeded in surrounding the Mowli qaimaqam and a handful of police in the Government serai. The stout-hearted garrison held out until they were rescued by a body of Assyrians under the Assyrian bishop, Mar [illegible],